

STAND UP TO RACISM CONFERENCE

SATURDAY 21 OCTOBER
10.30am-4.30pm
Central London

Speakers include
Labour MPs Diane Abbott, Kate Osamor and
Catherine West. Trade union leaders Kevin
Courtney, Dave Ward and Roger McKenzie.

And leading activists including Salma Yaqoob,
Kate Hudson, Weyman Bennett and Lowkey

For details see page 5 and standuptoracism.org.uk



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WARNING

**Thousands join
racist march**



OVER 15,000 PEOPLE joined the Football Lads Alliance (FLA) march in London last Saturday. It was billed as "against extremism", but it was clear Muslims were the target. FLA leaders said, "We want our country back", demanded deportations and attacked Labour's shadow home secretary Diane Abbott.

It was a racist march, even if not everyone who attended saw themselves as racist. It's time for all anti-racists to argue and mobilise against this growing danger.

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Full report >>Pages 4&5

AS NASTY PARTY FALLS OUT GET OUT ALL THE TORIES



Theresa May—living on borrowed time

THE ZOMBIE Tory government survived another week. But the splits inside the cabinet are as sharp as ever.

The one thing they all agree on is that they will fight to the end to defend the rich and big business.

The rotten Tory government continues to wreck the NHS, hold down pay and whip up racist divisions.

And the Tory alternatives to Theresa May are just as bad as she is. Any party that would seriously consider the odious bigot Jacob Rees-Mogg as leader is indeed, as one Tory said, "in a deep and dark hole".

We can't wait until the next election to get them out.

It's time to step up the resistance on every front. That can deepen the Tories' crisis, drive them out, fight for workers' interests and get Jeremy Corbyn into Downing Street.

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ROYAL MAIL

Bosses run to the courts to try and stop post strike

ROYAL MAIL bosses ran to the courts this week in a desperate bid to stop a strike.

Postal workers were set to strike on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of next week.

They are engaged in a watershed battle over pensions, pay and conditions—and need support from other trade unionists.

>>Page 20

CATALONIA

Movement must stay on streets to beat the right

THE PRESIDENT of the devolved Catalan government was widely expected to declare independence from Spain this week.

Spanish prime minister Mariano Rajoy has sworn to stop it. The threat followed counter-attacks from opponents of independence.

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LABOUR

Corbyn at war with councils over 'social cleansing'

JEREMY CORBYN has said he wants to let tenants decide whether redevelopment projects go ahead.

Yet Labour council chiefs have defied his promises.

Housing activists stressed that Labour councillors must be "forced to take a side".

>>Pages 10&11



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'Disenchanted young people are not after Marxist revolution—they want to own a decent house'

Former higher education minister **David Willetts**

'What do you think you are doing you nutters?'

Foreign secretary **Boris Johnson** on those in the Tory party who are disloyal to Theresa May

'Nimbyism—and it needs to be put down'

Former Tory cabinet minister **Lord Tebbit** on anti-fracking

'In 2002 I bet Nigella £15,000 that Boris would be party leader within 15 years'

The odious **Toby Young's** wager with Nigella Lawson is running out soon

'Beef consommé, cream cheese and curry powder blended and topped with jellied soup and a black olive'

Margaret Thatcher's favourite recipe for a "mystery starter" in newly released papers



Murdoch's newspapers paid for spook on spook crime

RUPERT Murdoch's News Group Newspapers apologised in court and agreed to pay damages to a former army officer whose computer and emails were hacked.

At the high court News Group admitted that a private investigations firm had hacked the computer of Ian Hurst. The computer was hacked by Philip Smith.

Oddly, Smith and Hurst both served in the Force Research Unit (FRU), a secret unit of the British army in Northern Ireland. The unit armed and organised Loyalist death squads. They are pictured together above.

Private detective Jonathan Rees employed Smith as an investigator. Smith was jailed for stealing secret information from the Police National Computer.

Hurst recorded Smith saying he was in contact with Andy Coulson who went on to be a spin doctor for David Cameron.

Alex Marunchak, a News Of The World executive and Metropolitan Police employee, requested the hacking of Hurst's computer.

The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)—now known as the National Crime Agency—found out about the

hacking and passed the info to the Met in 2006.

The cops then did precisely nothing with the information.

Hurst was involved in naming former IRA interrogator Freddie Scappaticci as a British spy.

Smith and Hurst both published tenuous accounts of their role in Northern Ireland.

Hurst's former colleagues turned on him. Smith sent

out 100 emails revealing Hurst's real identity.

Smith was charged with intimidating a witness to an inquiry into British collusion with Loyalist paramilitaries.

The current case was between Hurst and News Group, Rees, Smith and Marunchak.

The Murdoch company had previously denied any computer hacking but settled and admitted it last week.

THE FORCE Research Unit in 1988 Ian Hurst circled on the left and Philip Smith circled on the right

A TORY MP flouted parliamentary rules by using House of Commons envelopes for sending surveys to constituents ahead of the general election. Chris Davies MP was criticised by Parliamentary Standards Commissioner Kathryn Hudson. She said the polls were party political and "served to increase awareness of his name". Davies apologised and agreed to pay £5,037.

Chris Davies and friend

UNIVERSITY bosses have apologised for using an image of Auschwitz on the front of a welcome pamphlet for new students. It was on a leaflet for a service at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. After complaints college dean Rev Jeremy Caddick said it referred to a sermon on evil.

Defending the realm means abuse cover up

FORMER TORY prime minister Edward Heath would have been quizzed by police over claims he raped and abused seven men and boys, a cops report revealed.

The suggestion from the cops' that a politician abused children caused right wing outrage.

Yet this week an inquiry was told that prosecutors lied to journalists about their decision not to press charges against the late MP Cyril Smith.

They ruled out prosecuting him in 1970 but denied having ever considered the case.

MI5 knew about the abuse but took no action as its role was "to defend the realm", the inquiry heard.

Further a report given to Lancashire police's chief constable in 1970 read, "He has used his unique position to indulge in a sordid series of indecent episodes with young boys towards whom he had a special responsibility."

The inquiry heard that Margaret Thatcher had been informed about the Smith's abuse before giving him a knighthood in 1988.

Sir Cyril Smith

Pauper Boris Johnson needs more money

BORIS JOHNSON raked in almost double his reported income through outside earnings.

The foreign secretary pleaded poverty to friends, saying he struggled to live on his £141,405 ministerial salary because of his "extensive family responsibilities".

But the register of MP's interests shows he has made a further £96,676 since being appointed to the cabinet. Between July 2016 and July 2017, he received

£88,678 in royalties from his books and receives at least £10,000 a year in rental income. It's likely to be higher than that, but the register only requires MPs to specify if it is over £10,000.

So in total, that's at least an annual income of £238,081—eight times the average wage of full time workers.

But being a minister means he can no longer pursue other money spinning activities like his Telegraph column, from which he earned almost £1 million.

Cash-strapped

Navy torpedo nearly goes nuclear

A NAVY operator accidentally fired a frigate's torpedo at a nuclear dockyard during a test.

The unarmed 9ft missile from HMS Argyll shot over a jetty into a fence.

No one was injured in the blunder at Devonport Naval Base, Plymouth, in 2014, a Freedom of Information request revealed.

The unnamed operator returned to work under supervision.



66

The number of claims the Independent Police Complaints Commission has received that cops have taken advantage of vulnerable contacts since the start of April. Cops are being accused of sexually exploiting crime victims and witnesses every three days, new figures show.

Conditions in prisons get even worse

PRISON INMATES have to eat meals sitting on a bed feet away from an open toilet.

Many cells have broken windows, poor ventilation and heating, graffiti, damp, exposed wiring or vermin infestations.

Without access to cleaning materials, prisoners often have to resort to using T-shirts as makeshift mops.

In many prisons, nearly a third of those held report that they are locked in their cells for at least 22 hours a day.

The latest report from Chief Inspector of Prisons Peter Clarke says poor conditions are made worse by overcrowding.

One prisoner in four is held in conditions officially categorised as overcrowded.

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Write to
Socialist Worker
PO Box 71327
London
SE11 9BW

Put May out of her misery—then sack all the Tories

by SARAH BATES

THERESA MAY narrowly survived an internal Tory party coup attempt last week in one of the worst weeks of her leadership so far.

Former party chairman Grant Shapps had been organising against May since June. He needed the signatures of 48 MPs to trigger a vote of no confidence.

But rebel MPs were told the coup would only be launched once Shapps had enough support—and most balked when he was prematurely ousted as a ringleader.

Backbencher Nadine Dorries MP was the first to publicly call for May to resign. But many MPs saw May's disastrous conference speech as an opportunity to get rid of her.

The calamitous speech—where part of the stage fell away and a comedian handed her a P45—continued what has been an undeniably terrible year for May.

The Shapps coup attempt follows a disastrous snap election in June.

It was supposed to strengthen May's authority in Brexit negotiations.

Instead it led to her losing her majority and shaking the “magic money tree” to go into coalition with the bigoted Democratic Unionist Party.

Behind the comedic mishaps are tensions in the Tory party that go much deeper than a bad speech or the personal qualities of May.

The biggest divide is over Brexit. The negotiations are likely to be drawn out, difficult and divisive at every level of the party.

Foreign secretary Boris Johnson has pitched himself into the battle, using every opportunity to undermine May. When not covering his back telling MPs to “circle the wagons”, he's selling himself as a leader in waiting who can deliver a “hard Brexit”.

THERESA MAY not getting the message during her Tory party conference speech last week

May is under pressure to sack him in a cabinet reshuffle. But Johnson isn't alone in the attacks.

And on the opposite side there are calls to sack chancellor Philip Hammond because he wants to remain close to the European Union after Brexit.

The Tories also can't agree on how to address the growing resentment and frustration after seven years of austerity—or the growing support for Labour.

Weakness

May's “success” in hanging on as leader is itself a sign of Tory weakness. There is simply no obvious candidate to replace her.

Many Tories will be reluctant to launch a potentially lengthy and

damaging leadership contest.

Rivalries between senior members of the cabinet meant they couldn't agree on a successor after the general election. Even if they had, that candidate could struggle to defeat a hard right wing backbencher such as Jacob Rees-Mogg.

May still has people loyal to her—or at least more firmly opposed to her rivals.

Prominent figures such as Scottish Tory leader Ruth Davidson have focused their fire on Johnson.

But despite all that one Tory minister told the Sunday Times newspaper that May's leadership would be “over before Christmas”.

May is hanging on by a thread. The Tories are in disarray—mass resistance could finish them off.

SCOTLAND

SNP licks its wounds in subdued conference

THE SCOTTISH National Party (SNP) conference in Glasgow this week met in a subdued mood. It follows a general election where the SNP fell from 56 MPs to 35.

Although the SNP is still clearly the most popular party, current polls suggest that the Scottish parliament would lose its present pro-independence majority in new elections.

And Labour is recovering at least some of the ground it lost so disastrously in recent years. Jeremy Corbyn's net approval in Scotland has risen by 62 percentage points from -42 to +20 in just over a year.

In an effort to recover some of its radical gloss the SNP this week tried to highlight policies that will help working class people. These included an increase in free childcare.

But the detail shows how meagre such plans are.

On Monday Scottish finance minister Derek Mackay told delegates the public sector pay cap would go. But he added that there would be no large increases unless the Tories stumped up more cash.

Unions responded that “public workers won't wait for Westminster” and said Mackay should use his tax powers to produce rises above inflation.

At the same time, despite party leader Nicola Sturgeon's call to “put Scotland in the driving seat”, the SNP is not pushing for a quick second referendum on independence.

Socialist Worker Appeal to raise £125,000

Socialist Worker is the voice of people fighting for a better world. It dispels the racist scapegoating and anti-working class rhetoric of the mainstream press.

We publish stories of successful strikes, protests and pickets that beat back the bosses and bigots. We are asking everyone who enjoys Socialist Worker to donate as much as they can and help fund the resistance.

I SUPPORT THE APPEAL BECAUSE...

The Socialist Worker paper has been very beneficial to me. As a university student, reading this has enabled me to stay up to date with politics and events.

Around campus, there are more of us eager to know what is going on around the world.

The paper really helps us explore deeper into philosophy, history, politics and economics and gain a wider understanding about current affairs.

Ammarah Hassan
SWSS member at
Queen Mary University

To donate go to www.socialistworker.co.uk/appeal

Call 020 7840 5620 or send a cheque, payable to 'SW Appeal' to PO Box 71327, London SE11 9BW



IN THIS WEEK

1913

Hundreds killed in mine explosion

THE WORST mine disaster ever in Britain at Senghennydd in South Wales on 14 October killed 439 miners and one rescuer.

Mines in the area were notorious for the “firedamp” gases that led to a huge explosion.



Dangerous new racist movement mobilises thousands

SEVERAL THOUSAND people joined a march in central London on Saturday of last week called by the Football Lads Alliance (FLA).

The FLA claims that its marches are to oppose “extremism”. It claims it is “not racist” and is “peaceful”. But it has attracted known racists and fascists—and Saturday’s protest showed its true colours.

Its founders and leading members made racist speeches.

The FLA’s leaders had said they would “swamp London with 30-40,000 people”. That didn’t happen.

Between 15 to 20,000 assembled at the beginning, but numbers sharply dropped by the time it reached Downing Street.

Fascist

Former leader of the fascist English Defence League (EDL) Tommy Robinson was at the head of the march as it set off from Park Lane.

Some of those demonstrating seemed genuine in their belief that the FLA is not racist. They said they were there because they wanted the government to do more to tackle terrorism.

“People say we’re EDL, but this has nothing to do with the EDL,” said one.

But even if some think the FLA isn’t racist, racists and fascists feel

comfortable at its events.

“Muslims aren’t part of the country,” one marcher from east London told *The Independent* newspaper.

“They don’t mingle. We’re being overrun and can’t say nothing about it,” he said.

The biggest cheers went to the most right wing speeches. FLA founder John Meighan was cheered when he called for deportations.

“We want all suspected terrorists who are not British citizens to be permanently removed from the country,” he said. “Why should they be allowed to come over here? They’re not British citizens—get them out.” He then led a chant of, “Out, out, out!”

He also targeted shadow home secretary Diane Abbott, to loud cheers. Meighan mentioned Abbott and said, “It’s time for you and your motley crew to move over—the FLA are taking over now”.

Meighan’s call that “we want our country back” was taken up by chanting from the crowd.

Former soldier Phil Campion said, “As far as I’m concerned we’re at war.” One protester responded by shouting, “Kill ‘em all.”

Campion said, “Politicians have surrendered in arrival halls and airports. They have housed, fed and clothed the enemy.”

“It’s time to stand up to terror,” Campion went on. “The political correctness has gone too far. I’m not allowed to say anything anymore,” he said from the platform.

A speaker from Veterans Against Terrorism (VAT) said, “There is a very serious threat that faces this country. We’ve got to call it as it is. That threat is Islamic supremacy and Jihadism.”

The FLA’s message will boost every Islamophobe and racist across Britain.

Stand Up To Racism organised a counter-protest outside Downing Street. People had abuse hurled at them.

The FLA has no doubt attracted a mix of people, not all of whom are hardened racists. But there is racism at its heart.



THOUSANDS ATTENDED Saturday’s march

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

Take the rise of the FLA seriously—as well as the racism it feeds on

THE WHOLE of the left must treat the Football Lads Alliance (FLA) as a serious threat. This was not a rump group of hundreds, it was a march of thousands.

The FLA’s leaders have organised and mobilised people behind a racist agenda.

Their speeches (see left) made clear they want to take the FLA further rightwards towards open Islamophobia.

This doesn’t mean everyone on the march was racist—but it was a racist march.

There can now be no doubt there is a racist core which is growing and dominant.

And fascists are able to be on the marches and try to grow. It will have boosted every Nazi and racist in Britain.

It’s significant that many marchers treated fascist former EDL leader and British National Party member Tommy Robinson like a celebrity on the march.

There is clearly an audience for far right ideas within the FLA.

This doesn’t mean that it is a fascist movement. But its leaders

want to build a racist movement in the streets (see right).

And the FLA march reflected the racism within wider society that has been whipped up by politicians and newspapers.

Scapegoating of Muslims for terror attacks is common place from right wingers to liberals who have made concessions to them.

Mainstream

Meighan’s call for deporting terror suspects and his dog whistles about “extremism” echo and then push further the racism of mainstream politicians and the media.

The difference is that the FLA put thousands onto the streets because of this sentiment.

Meighan previously argued the FLA’s aim was putting “mass numbers on the streets” and that they had to “crawl before we can walk”.

They have now put mass numbers onto the streets—and those who want to take on the “harder issues” feel emboldened.

The right is in flux. Fascist groups are down and Ukip has collapsed—but this means the right could regroup around a new formation.

That means we have to oppose the fascists and racists who want to grow out of the FLA. And it also means building a movement against the mainstream Islamophobia and racism that has given the FLA an audience.

It was very important that Stand Up To Racism was on the streets on Saturday as the FLA marched. There will need to be more mobilisations against them.

We also need specific activity in workplaces, trade unions and football grounds unmasking and opposing those at the centre of the FLA.

Watch online

● Watch footage of the Football Lads Alliance march last Saturday bit.ly/2gbaAGx

Anti-racists were right to oppose the Football Lads

THE FLA march had been bigger when it set off from Park Lane, but there were no more than 5,000 on it by the time it reached Downing Street.

Around 150 Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) supporters gathered opposite Downing Street—and some leafleted the march as it went past.

They handed out leaflets with “Questions for the leadership of the FLA”.

The reactions from the marchers showed the tensions within the FLA.

The leadership around FLA founder John Meighan are being cautious.

Under pressure Meighan had pulled Nazi Toni Bugle from the line-up of speakers after “taking advice on the PR front”.

But as the bulk of the march went past, the reactions quickly turned. A health worker told *Socialist Worker*, “People were very aggressive, one person tore all the leaflets from my hand and



Anti-racists lined the road opposite Downing Street

threw them at me.

“There were vicious insults, some of them racist.”

Marches shouted slogans such as “Scum” and “You’re not English anymore”.

A section at the back of the march threw beer cans and coins into the crowd.

Those leafleting had to pull back.

Kevin Courtney, NEU education union joint general secretary, joined the SUTR event.

“You can understand expressions of outrage against terror attacks that have taken place,”

he told *Socialist Worker*.

“But when I look at the first march there are some with racist and Islamophobic views—it could be a recruiting ground.”

One SUTR protester was called a “black bastard” and another a “mongrel”. One shouted, “I hope they bomb your family.”

Some fought to break through police lines and physically attack SUTR protesters.

It was right for anti-racists to be on the streets to show opposition to the FLA.

Opening the door for Nazis

GERMANY GIVES a warning of how anti-Muslim street protests can build a hard racist movement with Nazis operating inside it.

The demonstrations by the anti-Muslim Pegida movement in 2014 were crucial to the growth of the AfD (Alternative for Germany).

Unlike in Britain, where the Pegida demonstrations were simply a front

any kind of radicalism, together against violence”.

The AfD grew from such protests and became a racist force that also projected a fake concern for working class people and hostility to mainstream parties.

In recent parliamentary elections the AfD took 94 MPs. The fascist wing inside it has been much strengthened.

Organise at SUTR conference

THE FLA march is another reminder of the urgent need to build a mass anti-racist movement. That’s why Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) was launched.

Moazzam Begg, outreach director of human rights campaign Cage, addressed local SUTR rallies in Cardiff last week and in Bristol on Monday.

Another rally in

Newham, east London, on Wednesday was also set to hear speeches from relatives of Edson Da Costa. He died in June after the Metropolitan Police arrested him in Newham.

A crucial opportunity will be the SUTR national conference in central London on Saturday of next week. It will bring together campaigners

including shadow home secretary Diane Abbott and trade union leaders Dave Ward and Kevin Courtney.

Workshops will see activists debate and organise around issues such as deaths in custody, confronting Islamophobia, supporting refugees, and immigration policy after Brexit.

To register go to standuptoracism.org.uk

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

FIGHTING RACISM MEANS FIGHTING THE TORIES

TORY PRIME minister Theresa May announced a campaign against racism on Tuesday.

A new website was launched and government departments will be expected to “explain or change” their procedures to account for disparities.

It’s outrageous hypocrisy. May has presided over vicious racist assaults both as prime minister and home secretary.

Now she throws up her hands in horror at the results of the policies her own government peddles.

As home secretary May was responsible for the infamous “go home” vans that threatened undocumented migrants with deportation.

Hostile

She said she wanted “to create a hostile environment” for such migrants.

When David Cameron called refugees stranded in Calais “a bunch of migrants” she cheered along with the rest of the Tory front bench.

In 2015 May said immigration made it “impossible to build a

cohesive society”.

She trotted out the old lie that migration means “wages are forced down even further while some people are forced out of work altogether.”

The Islamophobic Prevent strategy was pushed out further and deeper under her watch as well.

So nobody can believe that May is serious about tackling racism.

The party she leads is completely wedded to using it as a means of dividing us while it pursues the interests of the rich.

Tory racism gives racist movements such as the Football Lads Alliance—and others—the oxygen they need to breathe



May throws her hands up in horror at the racist policies of her government

SERVICES ON THE BRINK

PUBLIC SERVICES are at breaking point after seven years of Tory austerity.

Standards in patient care could collapse by the NHS’s 70th birthday next July, according to a shocking report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) watchdog.

The CQC estimated that one in eight older people already go without essential care.

Chronic shortages of staff and beds have left the NHS “straining at the seams”. This meant 2.5 million people spent longer

than four hours in accident and emergency in 2016/17. Hospital bed occupancy has shot up to 91.4 percent—and has not dropped below the recommended 85 percent for 15 years.

The NHS crisis has combined with the slashing of council social care budgets to create a perfect storm.

This same Tory recipe of budget cuts and privatisation means prisons in England and Wales are “full to bursting”. More than 85,000 people are languishing in

jails—that’s just over 1,000 below the “usable operational capacity”.

The Chief Inspector of Prisons report said, “Prisoners are held in conditions that fall short of what most members of the public would consider as reasonable or decent.”

The only solution to save public services is to reverse the privatisation and budget cuts—and send fewer people to prison.

Bringing our services back from breaking point means breaking the Tories.



Marxism in Scotland 2017

CRISIS, CLASS & THE LEFT

A day of debate and discussion hosted by the Socialist Workers Party

Saturday, 28 October, 10.30am
Renfield St Stephens Centre, Glasgow G2 4JP

● Tickets £10 waged, £5 unwaged ● book at tinyurl.com/EMIS2017



Campion and Meighan

ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Spanish repression props up the EU too

“WHEN ONE joins the civil guard, one declares civil war,” wrote the novelist Ramon Sender in 1936, the year his native Spain disintegrated into war.

The paramilitary civil guard were a repressive instrument of the decaying Bourbon monarchy in the 19th century. They became a symbol of the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, who emerged victorious from the civil war and ruled Spain between 1939 and 1975.

Spanish prime minister Mariano Rajoy won’t have been insensitive to this symbolism when he sent in the civil guard to crush Catalonia’s independence referendum. After all, his governing Popular Party (PP) was founded by Manuel Fraga, a minister under Franco.

Of course, apologists will be quick to insist that the PP is a liberal-democratic party—nothing to do with the bad old Franco days. This is true only up to a point.

The PP defends the tradition of Castilian centralism that became entrenched under the Bourbon monarchy in the 18th and 19th centuries. This involved the suppression of the rights of the non-Castilian regions—most notably Catalonia and the Basque country.

This repression returned to haunt Madrid in the early 20th century.

Catalonia and the Basque country developed into economically advanced regions that increasingly asserted demands for autonomy or independence. This helped stoke the crisis of the Spanish state that led to the civil war.

Franco ferociously repressed Basque and Catalan nationalism in particular.

The latest bout of repression is justified by appeal to the 1978 Constitution, which established today’s parliamentary democracy in Spain.

But this is a highly contradictory document that affirms both “the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation” and “the right to self-government of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed”.

The Constitution was the product of a specific constellation of circumstances. Efforts to make a “negotiated break” with Francoism left the key institutions of the Spanish state and of Spanish capitalism in place.

The Basque and Catalan nationalist movements had fought against the dictatorship, and so had to be given rights of self-government. But the army retained the duty “to defend [Spain’s] territorial integrity”.

Guerrilla

The compromise stuck, despite a long-running guerrilla war in the Basque Country. The Spanish state became a pillar of the European Union (EU). The European connection—trumpeted by Spanish and EU politicians—may however be its undoing.

Catalonia is economically the most important Spanish region, accounting for a fifth of national income.

But, like the rest of the state, it has been hit hard by austerity implemented by Rajoy. He has pretty faithfully implemented the instructions of the European Commission and the European Central Bank since he took office in 2011.

Rajoy and the PP also successfully campaigned against a deal negotiated by the preceding Socialist Party government that would have given the regions more powers.

So Catalonians have been confronted by an intransigent right wing government in Madrid simultaneously imposing austerity and resisting their right to self-determination.

Brussels’ support is important to Rajoy, who presides over a minority government kept in office by the Socialist Party. And the Commission first vice-president, Frans Timmermans, defended what he called the “proportionate use of force” by Madrid’s riot squads.

The reason is clear enough. “The Catalan crisis poses a threat to the European order,” wailed the Financial Times last week.

“Just as the eurozone’s sovereign debt and bank crises came close to unravelling decades of European construction, so the Catalan nationalists’ push for independence risks opening a Pandora’s box of problems.”

But Rajoy’s bully-boy tactics have already rebounded on him. After Greece and Brexit, Catalonia is the latest confrontation that exposes the fragile and undemocratic nature of the corrupt neoliberal European “order”.

Tory council in fresh bid to sideline Grenfell survivors

by ALISTAIR FARROW

THE TORY-LED council that ignored safety warnings ahead of the Grenfell Tower fire is still trying to sideline residents’ voices.

Council tenants in Kensington and Chelsea, west London, have serious concerns about new plans to hand over control of council housing stock.

The council took control of its housing stock away from the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO) last month.

The KCTMO, along with the council, had ignored Grenfell residents’ repeated warnings that the tower was a death trap.

But a document outlining plans for the new management shows that it hopes to have the last say in any hand-over. It offers no break from the lack of democracy that surrounded the KCTMO.

In order to shut down the KCTMO resident members would have to vote yes to the council’s entire document.

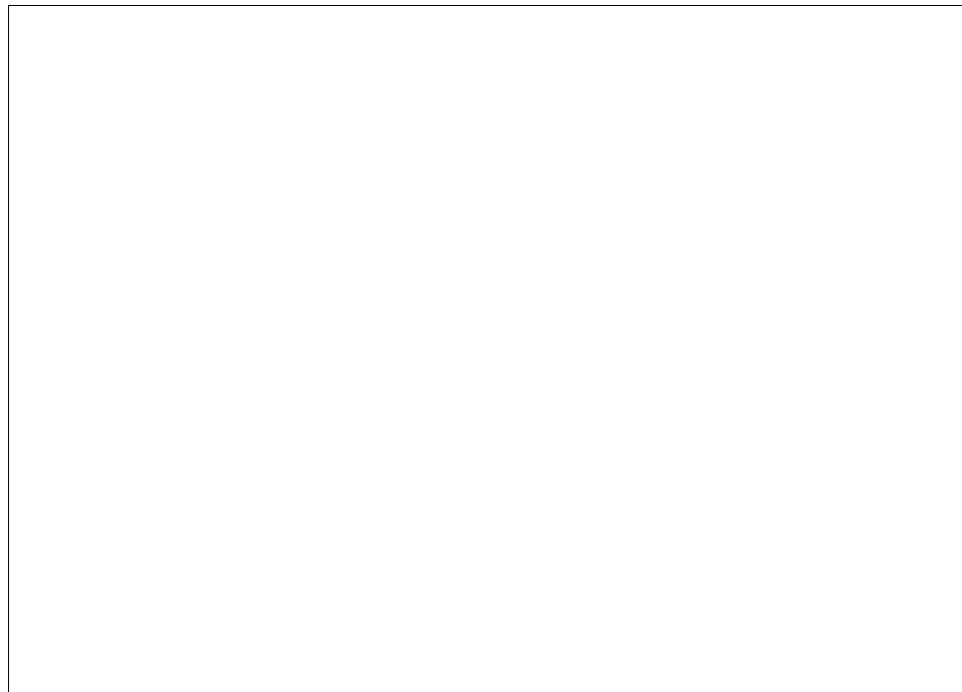
Chiefs

But that document gives the council chiefs the right to appoint anyone they like to the new management body.

That could leave the door open to housing associations and private housing registered providers to get a foothold in the organisation.

Campaigners and tenants in North Kensington also fear that Notting Hill Housing could be brought in to run the homes.

Notting Hill was behind the infamous Aylesbury Estate “regeneration” in



WEST LONDON residents have protested against Kensington and Chelsea council

“You only get a vote if you’re a KCTMO member.”

There are only around 5,000 KCTMO members, but there are 10,000 homes managed by the KCTMO.

That means people who have only recently come to Britain or people in a precarious housing situation—such as subletting—are less likely to get a vote.

Meanwhile, the council has been dragging its feet over housing Grenfell Tower survivors and those displaced by the fire.

And those who are rehoused may lose their council tenancy.

At the end of last month council leader Elizabeth Campbell said 20 families were in permanent

accommodation. Even that may be an overestimate.

The council leadership has been in negotiation with housing associations since at least early August.

That negotiations have taken so long is a scandal in itself and many questions remain to be answered.

For instance, are housing associations resisting? Or are the council waiting to see if they can claim the money back from the Tories, rather than take it out of their reserves?

Kensington and Chelsea council should be doing everything it can for survivors. Instead it’s trying to exclude them from any involvement in the decision affecting their future.

Southwark, south London, which saw council tenants and leaseholders forced out.

North Kensington housing activist Jan Sweeney told Socialist Worker, “If we agree to the document we could be handing it all over to a housing association.”

Jan added that most council tenants will be excluded from the vote. “Not every resident can vote,” she said.

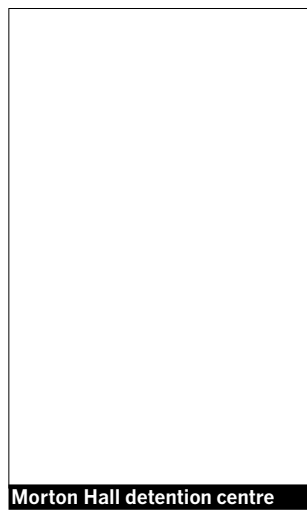
Another death in detention centre

A JAMAICAN man detained at Morton Hall immigration removal centre in Lincolnshire died in hospital on Tuesday of last week.

It was the third death in detention in Britain in just a month, following the deaths of Polish man detained at Harmondsworth and a Chinese man at Dungavel.

Some 43 people have died in or shortly after detention since 2000.

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman has launched an investigation into the Morton Hall death.



Morton Hall detention centre

Evidence about the mistreatment of detainees, including at hospital or when suicidal, continues to stack up.

Thousands of refugees and migrants every year are locked up in detention centres.

There has been outrage whenever more evidence of abuse in detention centres has been brought to light.

The prison service, border agency, home office and private contractors must be made to answer for every life lost or abuse committed on their watch.

FIGURE IT OUT

4 people have died in immigration detention centres this year, according to the charity Inquest

3 of those have died in the space of less than a month

43 people have died in detention centres or soon after leaving since 2000

Catalan movement needs to stay on streets to beat right

The Spanish state is fighting tooth and nail to undermine any declaration of independence by the Catalan government. It will take the power of the working class to win, argues **Dave Sewell**

CATALAN PRESIDENT Carles Puigdemont was widely expected to declare independence from the Spanish state after Socialist Worker went to press on Tuesday.

Pro-independence groups called for mass demonstrations outside the Catalan parliament where Puigdemont was set to speak.

They want to counter threats from the Spanish government—and make sure Puigdemont doesn't back down.

Spanish prime minister Mariano Rajoy has sworn to stop independence—if necessary by invoking Article 155 of the Spanish constitution to shut down the Catalan government.

The Spanish state's top court banned a session of the Catalan parliament planned for Monday night, meaning MPs would have risked arrest if they attended.

Threat

Pablo Casado, a senior spokesperson for Rajoy's Tory PP party, made a still grislier threat on Monday.

He said, "Perhaps the person who makes the declaration will end up like the person who made the declaration 83 years ago."

That person—former Catalan first minister Lluís Companys—ended up being tortured and executed.

The threat followed a week of counter-attacks from the opponents of independence.

The head of the Catalan police was summoned to court accused of "sedition" for not repressing the independence referendum on 1 October hard enough.

The Spanish nationalist right held mass demonstrations in Barcelona and other cities on Sunday. Fascist groups openly took part.

And major firms including



A MASS demonstration in Barcelona demands Catalan independence

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Catalonia's two top banks moved their legal headquarters out of Catalonia—helped by a decree from Rajoy's government.

So far the moves are symbolic. But it sent a clear warning that Catalan big business would take Spanish rule over independence even with Puigdemont's pro-business government.

They cannot be relied on as allies in the struggle for independence.

The rich fear "instability"—and especially mass mobilisations such as last week's Catalan general strike against the repression of the referendum.

Puigdemont's calls for international mediation have been ignored or rejected.

The French government said on Monday that it would not recognise a declaration of independence.

But the movement that defended

the referendum and then mobilised the general strike hasn't gone away.

Some of the smaller unions that initiated the general strike gave legal notice for new strike days this week and next.

These could turn into real strike calls after Tuesday.

The independence movement can only survive—let alone win—by radicalising and building on the power of working class people.

Struggle is more than spat over who controls state

UNELECTED courts and cops are at the heart of any state. Behind the war of words between Catalan and Spanish authorities is a tussle over who controls them.

Thousands of Spain's paramilitary Guardia Civil are currently in Catalonia.

This is partly because the Spanish authorities don't trust the Catalan cops, known as the Mossos d'Esquadra. The head of the high court in Catalonia asked the Guardia Civil to take over security duties at the court rather than risk the Mossos removing him.

Mossos chief Josep Lluís Trapero is in court for allegedly "preventing the application of laws" during the referendum.

The Mossos did shut down some polling stations—but not those occupied by protesters.

There's also a row about who gets the guns.

The Spanish government has spent a year blocking the Catalan government's order of almost 1,000 machine guns and rifles.

It said it was because Catalan ministers refused to say what the weapons are for. It's far more than



Catalan cops during the general strike

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

a regional police force would ask for—more like the number needed to set up a national police force.

These questions are fundamental to an attempt to create a new state.

But the Mossos are as guilty as any other cops of repressing strikes and protests and harassing black people.

They are as much the enemy of Catalan workers as Spanish cops.

On other pages...

National struggle and class
>>Page 14&15

Spanish left is divided

SOCIALISTS around the world have been inspired by the fight for Catalan independence, but the Spanish and Catalan left is far more divided.

The Labour-type Socialist Party stands firmly against it. The party's Catalan wing was behind the court challenge that banned Monday's session of the Catalan parliament.

But Socialist council leaders in several Catalan towns let the referendum go ahead.

Radical left party Podemos slammed Rajoy's bullying, but also it hopes to "keep Spain together".

Catalonia has a large pro-independence left, from the centre left ERC to the anti-capitalist CUP.

Popular

But even there figures as popular as Barcelona mayor Ada Colau take a position similar to Podemos.

Some activists are rightly suspicious of Catalan nationalists with a grubby past.

Others buy into the myth that unity between workers comes through the unity of the state.

For Podemos there's a more fundamental reason. It seeks to win elections across Spain, then use its control of the state to enact reforms. Catalan independence could deter some voters. More importantly it would weaken that state.

But for socialists who look to workers' struggles against the state, that's part of the reason to support independence.

Trump's threats over Iran deal can plunge him into new crisis

US president Donald Trump has hinted that he could dump a nuclear deal with Iran—but it could be his undoing, says **Alistair Farrow**

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has implied that he will undermine a deal reached in 2015 to limit Iran's nuclear programme.

The deal limited Iran's ability to enrich uranium for eight years and reduced its stockpiles. Trump has called it the "worst deal ever".

The US president has to report regularly to Congress on the state of the deal. The next scheduled report is on 15 October.

There's no evidence Iran isn't honouring its side of the deal. US secretary of state Rex Tillerson admitted as much last month at the United Nations.

However, Tillerson went on to claim, "It's pretty difficult to say that the expectations of the parties that negotiated this agreement have been met."

Those "expectations" relate to Iran's conduct outside the agreement, such as its interventions in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

After Trump reports, Congress will have 60 days to decide whether to reimpose the sanctions that were lifted as a result of the deal.

Revolution

These were first introduced in 1979 as a response to the Iranian revolution. Former president Bill Clinton increased them in the 1990s, as did Barack Obama in 2012.

The sanctions were ruinous for ordinary Iranians. They also strengthened the right's grasp on the machinery of the state.

Iran began to develop its nuclear weapons programme seriously after former president George W Bush's wars brought US troops to its neighbouring countries Iraq and

BACK STORY

US president Donald Trump could decertify a deal with Iran

- The deal, which limits Iran's nuclear capabilities, saw an end to sanctions against the country
- There is little mood among other countries for the US to reopen hostilities with Iran
- Trump has also made new threats against North Korea
- He said "talking to North Korea hasn't worked" and added ominously that, "only one thing will work".

Afghanistan. Obama's decision to broker the deal with Iran and four other states showed the limits of US imperial power. His attempt to contain China meant the US had to make compromises elsewhere.

There is little mood among the other signatories of the deal—Britain, Russia, China, France and Germany—for the US to reopen hostilities with Iran's regime.

Even in Israel, which vehemently opposed the deal initially, opinion is split.

Trump has picked fights with North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un, challenged China and battled sections of the ruling class in the US.

Opening up a new confrontation with Iran, opposed by both the US's enemies and allies, could be one of the nails in his coffin.



TRUMP HAS told North Korea that now is 'the calm before the storm'

PICTURE: IIP PHOTO ARCHIVE/FICKR

AUSTRIA

Tories' racist agenda in Austria has boosted the fascist Freedom Party

by DAVE SEWELL

AUSTRIAN parliamentary elections on Sunday could see the fascist Freedom Party return to government as part of a right wing coalition.

The conservative People's Party—which has been part of every government for the last 30 years—is expected to win.

Its new leader, former foreign minister Sebastian Kurz, has tried to pose as an outsider shaking up politics.

This is helped by his relative youth—Kurz is just 31 years old.

Court

But he has pursued a hard racist agenda to court the Freedom Party's voters.

Kurz's burqa ban came into force this month. As foreign minister he was instrumental in

closing borders to refugees in 2015 and has vowed to halt "illegal" immigration.

Some commentators say that this is the way to beat the Freedom Party. But the fascists don't see it that way.

Norbert Hofer, who nearly won Austria's presidential election for the Freedom Party last year, told the Financial Times newspaper that being copied by other parties helped its image.

"You can no longer accuse us of being right wing extremists," he said. "But we always say, the politics of the Freedom Party are best implemented by the Freedom Party."

The Labour-type Social Democratic Party—in coalition with the People's Party—isn't helping either.

It responded to the election call by ending a 30-year ban

on coalitions with the Freedom Party. It now imposes conditions on future coalition parties that, in practice, would still probably exclude the Freedom Party.

Toxic

But the high profile change was calculated to tell Freedom Party voters that it no longer considered the party toxic.

The Social Democrats are being punished in the polls for delivering nothing in office to their working class supporters.

The other big party of the centre left, the Greens, in May expelled its youth wing which then formed an alliance with the Communist Party.

The Freedom Party's entry into government in 2000 provoked mass protests.

More will be needed to stop it today.

For LGBT+ rights in Egypt

A VICIOUS homophobic campaign is underway in Egypt.

It follows the arrest of seven people alleged to have raised the rainbow flag during a concert on 22 September in the capital Cairo.

According to the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR) the crackdown has led to over 50 arrests of people across the country based on their sexuality or perceived sexuality.

The Revolutionary Socialists

in Egypt are organising in defence of LGBT+ people.

Their statement says, "We totally reject smearing and ostracising LGBT+ people."

"The Revolutionary Socialists declare their support for diversity and difference. We are for the right to live without oppression, persecution and ostracism, and for the right to openly express this diversity."

For more go to bit.ly/2y78NHe and to read the full statement go to revsoc.me/statements/37527/

Fire union supports protesters

I WOULD like to clear up the involvement of firefighters in the Kirby Misperton anti-fracking camp. The police asked us to attend the camp and remove a protester from a tower.

The Kirby Misperton campaigners have got the full solidarity of myself and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

I voted in support of the anti-fracking resolution brought before FBU national conference and I believe fracking has no place in our country, let alone North Yorkshire.

I signed up to support the Frack Free United campaign earlier this year.

I am disgusted and disappointed that firefighters were put in such a position by the police and senior fire service managers deciding to force firefighters to attend the site last week.

We are clear this is not the role of the fire service. We are there to render humanitarian services and save life and property, not provide law and order intervention.

I have raised the issue with the assistant chief fire officer.

He was set to speak to his counterpart in North Yorkshire Police to suggest that the fire service cannot be used in such a way again.

North Yorkshire FBU will decide whether we need to take further measures to prevent our members being exposed to such situations again in the future against their wishes.

Steve Howley
North Yorkshire FBU
branch secretary



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Boris Johnson's Libya insult exposes warmonger Tories

BORIS JOHNSON'S latest comments on Libya have rightly provoked anger.

Johnson said Libyan city Sirte is a perfect opportunity for British businesses—"all they have to do is clear the dead bodies away".

Many people across the political spectrum said Johnson is not fit to be foreign secretary, after the comments. Some said he should resign.

But while politicians and the media rightly condemn Johnson, where was the condemnation on those who voted for bombing Libya in the first place?

The majority of Tory MPs, 279, voted for military intervention in Libya.

These include the first MP to

criticise Johnson for his comments, Heidi Allen.

While insulting, Johnson's comments were hardly surprising.

After all, he was recently caught muttering a poem by Rudyard Kipling celebrating British colonialism while visiting a Buddhist temple in Myanmar.

But crucially, these comments are not just a simple Boris Johnson style gaffe.

They actually reflect the Tories' true mindset.

Wherever there is disaster or war, profits can be made.

It's all part of the sick nature of capitalism.

Johnson didn't even attempt to hide the potential to do business with his fatcat developer mates.

He said, "There's a group of UK business people, wonderful guys who want to invest in Sirte, on the coast".

The worst part about this is the sickening hypocrisy from the Tories.

They say that Johnson's comments don't represent their party.

But in reality, this is just another deal that would be done behind closed doors.

Saying these things in public just isn't the done thing.

The Tories' outrage is that their warmongering and plundering have actually been exposed to the public in broad daylight.

Katherine Igidbashian
North London

Just a thought...

Hypocrisy of free market

THE TORIES never seem to stop talking about the supposed benefits of a free market.

Theresa May even called it the "greatest collective agent of human change".

But they have never been committed to fully implementing it.

Instead they support many restrictions.

Immigration controls are one example. Airlines are certainly not free to transport anyone they want.

Timothy Baldwin
York

Solidarity for abortion vote

SOME 150 activists recently gathered at the Scottish parliament to support women's right to choose in the forthcoming Irish referendum on abortion.

It was called by the Scottish-Irish Abortion Rights Campaign.

The turnout and enthusiasm far surpassed what the organisers had been expecting.

With the referendum still months away this is a good sign of the sort of international solidarity that can be built as it approaches.

Penny Gower
Edinburgh

Half a century of activism

ABORTION Rights Cardiff recently opened their exhibition celebrating 50 years of the 1967 Abortion Act and 50 years of activism.

At least 50 people attended.

Julie Morgan, Labour Assembly Member and long term activist in the the movement and Jo Stevens, MP for Cardiff Central, came and spoke.

The fight goes on!

Teresa Goss
Cardiff

Don't stoop to their level

I'M NOT impressed at all with the front page of Socialist Worker "Sack Tory Rats" (Socialist Worker, 4 October).

I think using "vermin" as an insult is crass, and socialists should be raising the level of debate. Socialist Worker should not try to be a left wing Sun.

Graeme Tweedy
Devon

Britain helped create the Vietnam disaster

THE ATTLEE Labour government sent over 20,000 British troops into Vietnam in September 1945 to help re-impose French rule. This is missing from Ken Burns' recent documentary on the Vietnam War (Socialist Worker, 27 September).

British troops occupied Saigon and fought fierce battles with the Vietnamese resistance, claiming to have killed over 600 of them.

The British burned down

whole districts of the city in reprisal for resistance attacks. Fighting continued into the following year with the last British soldiers being killed in Vietnam in June 1946.

Without this assistance, the French would never have been strong enough to return and take control.

This would have saved the country from decades of warfare.

John Newsinger
Brighton

We have a right to work

IF YOU interviewed me for a job and looked through my CV you would see a confident, hard-working individual.

But I am a guide dog owner.

I don't like being out of work and constantly on the receiving end of snide comments.

I am currently volunteering and actively involved in disability rights activism. But I would rather be in paid



Disabled people protesting against benefit cuts

employment.

I don't have all the answers but through my experiences I am sure that we can work together to make paid employment worthwhile for all parties.

If all employers, public and private sector, are able to take themselves out their comfort zone we can have positive action.

Joanna Penn
Lowestoft

CORBYN'S FIGHT TO END 'SOCIAL CLEANSING'

Labour councils and Labour's leadership seem to be on opposite side of the fight for better housing. Corbyn wants to give tenants a say over toxic regeneration schemes—but councillors have other ideas. Campaigners at the forefront of the battle spoke to **Alistair Farrow**

JEREMY CORBYN'S plan to let tenants decide if redevelopment projects go ahead could put him on a collision course with Labour councils.

"People who live on an estate that's redeveloped must get a home on the same site and the same terms as before," he promised at Labour conference. He called for estate residents to have votes on proposed regeneration projects

But no sooner had Corbyn stepped off the stage than Labour council chiefs defied his promises. Alan Strickland, the lead councillor for housing in Haringey, said, "We do not expect to start using Yes/No ballots."

The north London council is pushing through a £2 billion regeneration project of seven estates through the Haringey Development Vehicle (HDV). This is a joint company with private developer Lendlease.

And London's Labour mayor Sadiq Khan is giving ammunition to the council bosses looking to defy Corbyn.

Strickland referenced a draft Good Practice Regeneration Guide published by Khan last year. Votes by tenants "can risk turning a complex set of issues that affects different people in different ways over many years into a simple Yes/No decision at a single point in time," it said.

Strickland's outburst is a public



HARINGEY COUNCILLOR Alan Strickland (top, left) and **London mayor Sadiq Khan** (top, right) are driving though the gentrification agenda, while communities are marching against them

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

expression of a battle raging in the party behind closed doors. Nick Rogers, a Labour Party member in Haringey, told Socialist Worker, "This is about an ideological battle between left and right in the party."

"This is the last gasp of the Blairites in the party who still hold quite important positions of power in the councils but also within the national party itself."

"Either they roll over and capitulate or they fight."

Faced with many Labour council bosses opposing his housing plans, how can Corbyn turn his vision into a reality?

Since becoming Labour leader Corbyn has made climbdowns over housing. At last year's Labour conference Corbyn said a Labour government would build 500,000 council homes.

Straight away then-shadow housing Theresa Pierce said the 500,000 homes would be social housing. Social housing includes housing associations, which behave much like private profit-making firms.

The pressure is on for Corbyn to make further concessions. Labour's shadow housing minister John Healey was a housing adviser to Labour prime minister Gordon Brown—and housing bosses have his ear.

A "Labour source" told Inside Housing magazine earlier this month that the Labour leadership didn't

want to "tie councils' hands" over redevelopments. The source added that any changes to housing policy would come when Labour was in government and not before.

Some campaigners are looking to select left wing candidates for future council elections. Nick said, "We've still got constituency elections in Haringey, but both Constituency Labour Parties and MPs in the area oppose the HDV."

But the divisions in the party over housing go beyond left and right.

Haringey is the most extreme example, but many Labour councils are quietly pushing ahead with similar redevelopment plans.

FUNDING FOR council housing has been slashed by successive governments, so many councils see redevelopment as one of the only way to generate funds. Some Labour councils and councillors who back Corbyn accept this logic behind redevelopment projects.

In Milton Keynes seven estates are up for redevelopment—demolition could begin as early as next year. The Labour-run council has begun a "consultation" with residents, similar to the sham one in Haringey.

John Orr is a parish councillor and residents association chair on one of

the estates facing demolition. "All we need is the council houses brought up to standard, there's no desire for regeneration from residents," he said.

"They said we're going to have to find a private partner, do the redevelopment, then take the profit from the extra homes built to fund the regeneration. They get £5 million a year in rents off these estates—and could refurbish our homes easily."

He added, "We've been fighting hard. They keep manipulating the data and lying, they refuse to rule out demolition. I'm living in a house that might be gone in five years."

Diarmid Ward, lead councillor for housing in Islington, north London, sympathised with the "difficult position" Haringey and other councils find themselves in.

"The Tories don't make it easy for councils to build council housing," he told Socialist Worker. "When we sell a home through the Right to Buy scheme we only get a third of the money back."

"The only way we're allowed to spend that is if we build another unit. Effectively the Tory government want us to build a house for the price of a third of a house."

Similar arguments are common among many Labour councillors.

Eileen Short from the Defend Council Housing (DCH) campaign argued that councillors need to be



"forced to take a side". "You have to take responsibility for changing the political landscape," she told Socialist Worker.

"That's what tenants and campaigners are up for but councillors have forgotten that's part of their job. "They are political players, they are a political force."

In Haringey the HDV has become a political dividing line within the local Labour Party.

That's because the housing campaign has pulled ordinary people into campaigning against the HDV. That level of politicisation needs to happen on a national level.

'Forced gentrification and social cleansing, [is when] private developers move in and tenants and leaseholders are moved out.

Regeneration under a Labour government will be for the benefit of the local people, not private developers, not property speculators.'

Jeremy Corbyn



Grenfell Tower in west London—a monument to those who put profits before people

The Labour leadership has won the battle over housing policy announcements, but turning pledges into a reality will take a lot of work.

"It's a question of where real power lies in society," said Eileen. "Is it on the streets or in parliament?"

If Labour councils accept the lie that there is no alternative to passing on Tory cuts, then they have already lost the fight.

But there are alternatives to giving in to the Tories. Party leaders could order councils to use their reserves and borrowing powers.

The money could be returned if Labour wins the next election.

Crucially, tenants need to mobilise to force Labour councils into action.

Activists and residents campaigning against regeneration and social cleansing can't just wait for the possibility of a Labour government in 2020.

The Labour leadership will be pushed to backtrack over its pledges. It must feel pressure from below.

The answer is to look outside the Labour Party and appeal to the millions of people in Britain whose homes are on the line.

Paul Burnham from Haringey DCH told Socialist Worker, "One of the reasons we always get shafted is because housing associations and property developers are better at lobbying."

"We have to bring the movement in to back up what Corbyn is saying."

He added, "Tenants and activists should go to Labour's National Policy Forum, protest outside and demand speaking rights."

Corbyn's speech has lifted people's sights and see that housing policy could be different. Now we need to build a movement that can force councils to toe the line—and bolster the leadership against making concessions.

Eileen said, "The councils are trying to manage as best they can and avoid conflict. But there is no middle ground anymore."

"What they need to do is say, stand up and fight."

GRENFELL

Tory worship of the market now has a tragic monument

THE MURDER of working class people in the Grenfell Tower fire in west London has forced housing onto the political agenda.

Jan Sweeney is a Labour Party member and housing campaigner in North Kensington where the blaze took place.

"At last people are starting to take notice of the housing crisis," she said.

"It's tragic that it took something like Grenfell to do that—it's shameful really."

Despite fine-sounding words, the Tories have shown that they have no desire to prevent another Grenfell from happening.

In his Labour Party conference speech Jeremy Corbyn used the tragedy to attack the Tories' record.

"Now that degraded regime has a tragic monument—the chilling wreckage of Grenfell Tower," he said.

He attacked the "decades of housing policies and privatisation and the yawning inequality in one of the wealthiest boroughs and cities in the world".

Simply pointing out Tory failings isn't enough—Labour councils should be at the forefront of a national campaign for fire safety improvements.

Instead, many Labour councils are dragging their heels over crucial work.

Cladding

Fiona Green, who is part of Hamerton Action Group in Manchester, told Socialist Worker about the Labour council's poor reaction to Grenfell.

It still has not tested all of the cladding on her estate for being flammable.

"We've been left in uncertainty and fear," she said.

"The council's response was to say, 'Contact your housing provider.' But the provider is an ALMO which is 75 percent owned by the council."

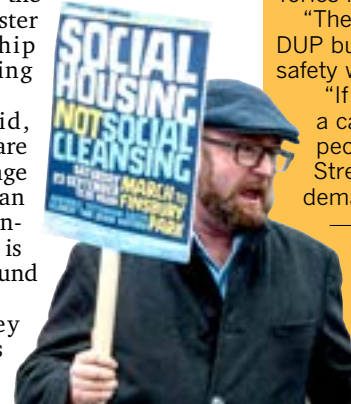
"They've formed a taskforce but you can't actually contact it."

Eileen Short from Defend Council Housing said, "The Labour Party in North Kensington should get in touch with other Labour councils to force the Tories into taking action."

"They have £1 billion for the DUP but not for funding fire safety work."

"If Labour councils put out a call we could have 100,000 people marching on Downing Street to deliver a petition demanding safe homes."

Come to the **National Housing Summit**, 25 November, 11am, NUT headquarters, Hamilton House, Mableton PI, Kings Cross, London WC1H 9BD. For details go axethehousingact.org.uk



WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

Why we celebrate the Russian Revolution

Wed 18 Oct, 7pm,
The Priory Rooms,
Quaker Meeting House,
40 Bull St,
B4 6AF

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

BARNSELY

British justice—no justice, no peace

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
YMCA, Blucher St, S70 1AP

BOLTON

Imperialism and revolution—who was Frantz Fanon?

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off Bradshawgate),
BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

Trade unions on the way back

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Little Horton Lane
(opposite the ice rink),
BD5 0BQ

BRIGHTON

Fighting Islamophobia today

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Ship St, BN1 1AF

BRISTOL

Chile 1973—a warning from history

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
YHA, 14 Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Why is Marx's Capital so important?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Red Triangle Cafe,
160 St James's St,
BB1 1NR

CHESTERFIELD

Universal Credit—what is it and how do we fight it?

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St,
S40 1QN

DONCASTER

Solidarity with Catalonia—should the left support independence?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Women's Centre
(Changing Lives),
5 Princes St, DN1 3NJ

DUNDEE

Will robots make us all redundant?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Dundee Voluntary Action,
10 Constitution Rd, DD1 1LL

SOCIALIST WORKER PUBLIC MEETINGS



As Corbyn takes on the establishment...

IS SOCIALISM POSSIBLE?

ABERDEEN

Wed 18 Oct, 6pm,
Belmont Cinema
Cafe, 49 Belmont St,
AB10 1JS

CAMBRIDGE

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
River Lane Centre,
River Lane,
CB5 8HP

LEICESTER

Sat 14 Oct, 12.30pm,
The Exchange,
50 Rutland St,
LE1 1RD

NORWICH

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place,
NR2 2SA

EDINBURGH

The Balfour declaration 100 years on

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria St,
EH1 2JL

HUDDERSFIELD

From Stalin to Putin—what do socialists say today about Russia?

Wed 18 Oct, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade (near both train and bus stations),
HD1 5JP

HULL

Are we too late to stop catastrophic climate change?

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
Cafe licious,
104 Cottingham Rd, HU6 7RZ

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

50 years after the Abortion Act—the fight for abortion rights

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
The Swarthmore
Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LONDON: BRIXTON

Malcolm X and the fight for black liberation

Wed 18 Oct, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd,
facing Windrush Square),
SW2 1EP

LONDON: CENTRAL

Black Lives Matter—fighting racism today

Thu 19 Oct, 6.15pm,
Learning Hub Room 2,
UCL South Quadrangle
(Opposite print room café),
Malet Place, WC1E 6BT

LONDON: HACKNEY

Imperialism and revolution—who was Frantz Fanon?

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner
Lower Clapton Rd), E5 0PU

LONDON: HARINGEY

Can non-violence get real change?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney Church Hall,
386 West Green Rd
(corner Vincent Rd),
N15 3QH

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Frantz Fanon—freedom fighter against racism and imperialism

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St, N7 6QT

LONDON: NEWHAM

North Korea, Trump and nuclear confrontation

Wed 18 Oct, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next
to Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

North Korea, Trump and nuclear confrontation

Wed 18 Oct, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St (opposite
Bethnal Green Rd Tesco),
E2 6HG

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Harriet Tubman and the fight against slavery

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Quaker Meeting House,
1a Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),
E17 4QU

NEWCASTLE

100 years on—celebrating the Russian Revolution

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
Broadacre House,
Market St,
NE1 6HQ

OXFORD

Fighting Islamophobia today

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

POOLE AND DORCHESTER

Syriza—just a Greek tragedy?

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
Dorford Centre,
2 Bridport Rd, DT1 1RR

PORTSMOUTH

The bloody history of slavery and empire—should all statues fall?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Somerstown
Community Centre,
River's St, PO5 4EZ

ROTHERHAM

Solidarity with Catalonia—should the left support independence?

Wed 18 Oct, 7pm,
Talbot Lane Methodist
Church Centre,
Moorgate St, S60 2EY

SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Art in the Russian Revolution and counter-revolution

Thu 19 Oct, 7pm,
Central United
Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St (near
Crucible Theatre),
S1 2JB

SOUTHAMPTON

The fightback in education—how do we save our schools?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Central Baptist Church Hall,
Devonshire Rd,
SO15 2GY

STALBANS

Podemos, Catalonia and the Spanish state

Wed 25 Oct, 7.30pm,
Trinity Church Hall (upstairs),
1 Beaconsfield Rd (near
St Albans City station),
AL1 3RD

SWANSEA

Catalonia, Scotland, Wales—independence, national liberation and socialism

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd,
SA20BP

TELFORD

From Deliveroo to McStrike—organising the unorganised

Thu 19 Oct, 7.30pm,
Carriages,
The Parade, Wellington,
TF1 1PY

WOLVERHAMPTON AND WALSALL

Are we headed for another world war?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Wild Bytes Cafe,
Darlington St,
WV1 4HW

YORK

Catalonia and independence—what do socialists say?

Wed 18 Oct, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

{ STAND UP TO RACISM }

BRISTOL

Rising Islamophobia, deaths in custody—where next for the fight against racism?

Tue 17 Oct, 7.30pm,
Hamilton House,
80 Stokes Croft,
BS1 3QY.
With Moazzam
Begg and others

LEICESTER

Rising Islamophobia, deaths in custody—where next for the fight against racism?

Wed 8 Nov, 7pm,
The City Retreat
community centre,
70-74 Church Gate,
LE1 4AL.
With Moazzam
Begg and others
MANCHESTER
Rising Islamophobia,
deaths in custody—
where next for the fight
against racism?
Wed 18 Oct, 7pm,
Methodist Central Hall,
Oldham St, M1 1JQ.
With Janet Alder,
Julie Ward MEP
and Zam Zam Ibrahim

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Science fiction epic takes on ethics of artificial intelligence

With stunning cinematography and a powerful plot, Blade Runner 2049 is a sequel with everything that fans will want, writes **Gabby Thorpe**

NO SCIENCE fiction writer manages to look at what could happen when Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes conscious more elegantly than Philip K Dick.

Blade Runner 2049, a sequel to the cult adaptation of his novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, has hit the screens 35 years after the original.

At the beginning Officer K (Ryan Gosling) discovers a secret when “retiring”—that is, hunting down and killing—a “replicant” android. It makes him question his whole existence.

This leads to a beautiful and hard to forget journey to find Rick Deckard (Harrison Ford), who disappeared after the events depicted in the original film.

Blade Runner 2049 opens with a brief explanation about replicants and the fate of Tyrell Industries after cold-hearted entrepreneur Niander Wallace (Jared Leto) took it over.

Encountering Wallace a bit later in the film instantly highlights one of capitalism’s biggest problems—the constant need for a “disposable workforce”.

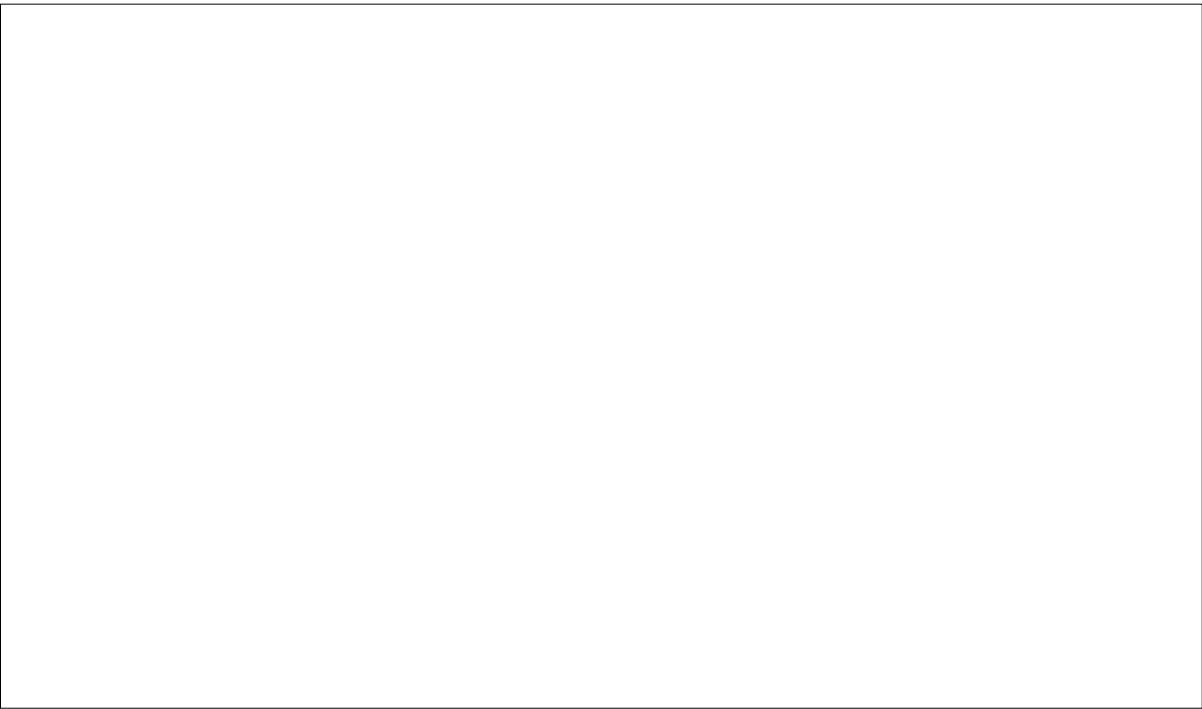
Woeful

Leto’s depiction of a tortured creator, despairing that he cannot “breed” his slaves, is arguably some of his best acting to date.

But Leto is not the only star. A stellar set of actors brings to life a dystopian future of hyperconsumerism.

Central to the plot is the struggle of replicants to find autonomy and agency.

The definition of reality is certainly central to the plot and we are reminded of it again and again. K’s



WHAT HAPPENS when artificial intelligence becomes conscious?

holographic girlfriend is a product of a booming companion industry.

Advertised as a product that will “say what you want to hear”, she appears to be as intelligent and emotional as any replicant or human.

But a question hovers over how genuine her companionship truly is.

The question runs through the film, with replicants desperately clinging to the hope offered to them by K’s discovery.

This philosophical theme is the film’s true strength and reflects, much like the original film, Dick’s talent for tackling important, ethical

questions. Aside from the thought provoking plot, the film also relies on breathtaking cinematography to keep viewers interested throughout the near three hour epic.

This is a success.

Astoundingly vast futuristic landscapes dominate the film, with a distinct contrast between the thriving centre of Los Angeles and the poverty stricken outskirts.

Other locations, deserted or reduced to rubbish tips, effectively convey a world that has been devastated.

Blade Runner 2049 offers an

intriguing and at times tragic experience.

Although it is not directed by Ridley Scott, as the original film was, Denis Villeneuve more than manages to keep up the style of the original film.

And Harrison Ford’s reprise as Deckard is everything that you would want it to be.

The only question still to be answered is—do androids dream of electric sheep?

Blade Runner
Directed by Denis Villeneuve
Out now

Electrical Gaza—the hope and terror in a siege city

ART

TURNER PRIZE 2017

Ferens Art Gallery,
Hull HU1 3RA.
Until 7 January 2018

IF ROSALIND Nashashibi doesn’t win the Turner arts prize, then something’s gone wrong.

All of the artists shortlisted, such as Lubaina Himid, Andrea Buttner and Hurvin Anderson, are thought provoking.

But Nashashibi’s film Electrical Gaza stands out way above the rest. It

was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum and filmed in the Gaza Strip in June 2014.

Gaza is one of the most densely populated territories on earth and it’s under siege from Israel.

The Israelis were already bombarding Gaza on Nashashibi’s first night there. And after a few days, she got a call from the foreign office asking her and the crew to leave because it was unsafe.

Nashashibi recalls how having the shoot cut short was very difficult for the crew and the people



Rosalind Nashashibi

around them. It was a sign of the violence that they knew was to come.

The film captures the everyday lives of the people in Gaza—children playing, people chatting in the street, taking photos of their friends, families at home.

The scenes are overlaid with images and sound. This puts across a sense of normality, beauty and hope—as well as a feeling of being hemmed in with impending violence.

Towards the end of the film a large, black, animated spot appears

over an alleyway scene. The dot steadily grows.

Nashashibi explained this was her way of trying to show the violence that was to come and that was already in the air.

She called the film Electrical Gaza to put across the charge and energy she felt there. It was exciting, but also absolutely dangerous and damaging.

Come and see the exhibition and enjoy looking at all the artwork, but save your focus for Electrical Gaza.

Eleanor Woyen

EVENT

RUSSIAN FILM WEEK

Various venues in London
19-26 November.
russianfilmweek.org

THE RUSSIAN Film Week 2017 opens next month in London. A wide range of innovative films are being shown.

The opening night will begin with a discussion with director Fedor Bondarchuk and the cast of Attraction.

In this futuristic film, the inhabitants of a Russian city begin to question their identities after an alien ship crash lands.

Many of the films deal with Russia’s Stalinist past



Spacewalker

and its impact on life today.

Spacewalker looks at Russia’s race to become the first country to put a man in space.

And science fiction thriller Guardians follows Patriot, a group of superheroes during the Cold War.

TOP 5 BOOKS

Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

- 1 Abortion wars—the fight for reproductive rights**
Judith Orr
- 2 Jeremy Corbyn, Labour and the fight for socialism**
Charlie Kimber
- 3 Forty miles of bad road—the Stars campaign for interracial friendship and the 1958 Notting Hill riots**
Rick Blackman
- 4 There’s no place—the American housing crisis and what it means for the UK**
Glyn Robbins
- 5 Lenin for today**
John Molyneux

Phone 020 7637 1848
bookmarksbookshop.co.uk
Why not visit the shop at 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE

IS THE area around Barcelona part of a country called Spain or one called Catalonia—and does it matter?

All nations are largely arbitrary. The people of any given country have little in common that they don't also share with people elsewhere.

For revolutionary socialists, the key divide is between classes—the workers whose labour drives society and the bosses who exploit them.

This cuts across nations. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels famously ended their 1848 Communist Manifesto with the call, “Workers of all countries unite.”

That doesn't mean that socialists ignore or oppose national struggles.

When the colonies of European empires won independence, it created new nation states.

Yet any socialist would celebrate these victories against oppression. Similarly, socialists actively support the right of Palestinians to fight for their rights against Israel.

Sometimes victories for colonies have sent empires into crisis and spurred on revolts in the imperial homelands too. These include British-ruled Ireland, French-ruled Algeria and Portugal's African colonies.

But not all national struggles are the same. Neither Catalonia nor, for that matter, Scotland are oppressed in the same way as Europe's colonies were.

Their rulers were enthusiastic participants in the empires of Spain and Britain.

Russian revolutionary leader Lenin argued for assessing “any national demand, any national separation, from the angle of the workers' class struggle.”

For instance, Marx and Engels saw democrats rallying behind Hungarian and Austrian nationalisms in central Europe. Meanwhile reactionaries used small Slavic state nationalisms to resist change.

Imperialism has repeatedly co-opted the language of national liberation. The US has hijacked national struggles by Kosovans and Kurds to legitimise its wars.

Britain's rulers justify keeping the remnants of empire with absurd talk of self-determination for Gibraltar or the Falklands.

Lenin wrote, “If we do not want to betray socialism, we must support every revolt against our chief enemy, the bourgeoisie of the big states, provided it is not the revolt of a reactionary class.”

Workers' unity and state unity are not the same thing. For instance, many on the Labour left claimed that supporting Scottish independence in 2014 would help nationalists and divide workers.

For fear of Scottish nationalism they backed British



A MASS protest in Barcelona following the Catalan independence referendum

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

NATIONAL STRUGGLE & CLASS

Some on the left see battles for independence as dividing workers, while others back them as fights for liberation. Dave Sewell looks at how to judge national struggles



Vladimir Lenin

nationalism. That pushed working class independence supporters away from Labour—and helped Scottish nationalists.

And it told workers in England and Wales that they shared with their rulers an interest in “the union”.

In contrast, revolutionaries' support for the self-determination of parts of the Russian empire in 1917 helped rally workers throughout the empire to a common revolutionary cause.



Catalan independence would plunge the Spanish state into crisis

Marx argued that the English working class could only defeat its rulers by breaking with them to support Irish independence.

To understand how to treat national struggles, we have to see through the lie that nations are natural. They are a relatively recent invention, bound up with the growth of capitalism.

Before the late Middle Ages people living within the kingdom of England, for example, would have little sense of shared identity. Many rarely

strayed far from their village—and wouldn't understand the dialects if they did.

There was no national government, only a vague allegiance to a distant king. Different factors began to shift this.

Kings needed consent for higher taxes to pay for wars. This created opportunities for different classes to revolt not just over local issues but for a say about the whole kingdom.

Most important was a new class that grew rich through commerce, not feudal obligations. The fragmentation of different towns and villages was an obstacle to growing their operations.

They needed a larger market with common rules and a common language. This created the need for a powerful central government.

Many in the growing, literate middle class were keen for jobs in such a government.

The idea of a nation united the grievances and aspirations of different classes to sweep away feudalism. It encouraged the poor to feel they had shared interests with capitalists and their state, rather than see them as oppressors.

AND the nation state helped promote domestic capitalists against foreign rivals. Nations became the model for driving capitalist development.

Colonists in the Americas fought to end British and Spanish rule and increase their own power. Frustrated elites in parts of Europe marginalised by existing nations fought to create new ones.

Independence struggles replaced colonialism with nationalist governments that prioritised the development of a national capitalist class.

These waves of national struggle reflect different stages in world history.

In today's world, almost entirely carved up by existing, developed nation-states, it's very hard to find space for new ones. So where do Catalonia and Scotland fit in?

Some nation-states, such as the one forged by the French revolution, successfully bludgeoned diverse regions into a single unit.

But where capitalism developed later it was harder for national movements to cohere.

After competing monarchies finally merged into one Spanish state in the fifteenth century, it was dominated by the aristocracy.

Capitalism eventually developed, but most successfully outside the Spanish-speaking core. Its would-be nation-builders were split between the flag of big but sluggish Spain and those of small but dynamic Catalonia and the Basque country.

In Britain capitalism developed early. English and Scottish nationalisms were already

entrenched by the time the United Kingdom was formed. They survived within and alongside a new British nationalism built on empire.

These nationalisms weren't progressive. In 1909, for example, Catalan bosses used nationalism against workers in revolt.

But in both Scotland and Catalonia, support for independence was limited until recent decades.

It became a central issue largely because of the failures of Labour-style parties and the 2008 financial crisis.

These created space for a new type of nationalist movement.

Independence supporters include a few big business owners and far more small ones as well as politicians, bureaucrats and intellectuals hungry for more influence.

But these movements have grown mostly by winning over millions of working class people.

Poorer people were more likely to vote for Scottish independence in 2014 as a way of fighting Tory rule and for a different society.

The Catalan referendum couldn't have happened without a mass movement of working class people to defend it.

Nationalist-led devolved governments fought to win the support of working class voters, creating a space for workers to put their own demands.

This has seen political leaders make promises to try and appeal to these demands.

For example, the Catalan government told a mass protest for refugees this year that independence was the way to let people in.

Meanwhile the Scottish government verbally opposes detention centres for migrants, as well as Trident nuclear weapons.

Yet neither Scotland nor Catalonia would become a socialist paradise after independence.

Politicians, police, fascists and bosses in both countries will attack workers whichever nation-state they are in.

Socialists must prepare for such confrontations—not downplay them by idealising nationalism as left wing. But nor must they give nationalists a monopoly by abstaining from the independence fights.

Not all the hopes placed in independence are illusory.

The opposition from the ruling class shows it threatens their system.



Scottish nationalism—and its opponents (above) Voting yes in Barcelona (below)

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN



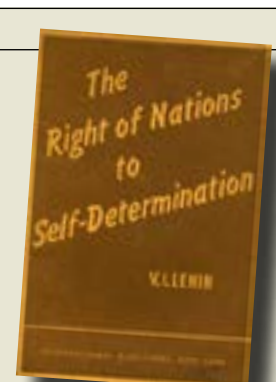
READ MORE

● **The return of the national question** by Chris Harman bit.ly/2ghc0wd

● **The Right of Nations to Self-Determination** by Vladimir Lenin bit.ly/2fVkZ98

● **The Communist Manifesto** by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels bit.ly/1gPDLW4

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



Catalan independence would plunge the Spanish state into crisis. It would blast holes in Nato and the European Union. Any Catalan attempt to rejoin them would trigger a debate about the militarisation, border policing and cuts they demand from member states.

It's a struggle socialists should support.

And the lessons workers are learning—such as how collective grassroots defiance can beat the cops—won't be forgotten.

In Catalonia today the actions and arguments of workers are shaping the fight for independence.

Their victory would create a new nation-state—but the battle could take us one step closer to a world with none.



Three Bolshevik heroes you may never have heard of

In the struggle for socialism, ‘ordinary people’ can do extraordinary things



IVAR SMILGA (right) in exile with others

1917 TIMELINE

23–25 September (8–10 October in the modern calendar)

● The third (and last) meeting of the Coalition government occurs, amid staunch protests from the elected Soviets

● Leading Bolshevik Leon Trotsky is elected as chair of the Petrograd Soviet

elected to the district workers' council, or Soviet. She played an important role in the October Revolution, coordinating the various detachments that were fighting for power.

Arishina Kruglova was another important Bolshevik woman worker. She had a job in a munitions factory in the First World War and would pack Bolshevik leaflets into the boxes of grenades.

Baba

She led militant demonstrations during the February Revolution. China Mieville writes in his book October, “Seeing workers from the Promet factory marching behind a woman, a Cossack officer jeered that they were following a baba, a hag.”

“Arishina Kruglova, the Bolshevik in question, yelled back that she was an independent woman worker, a wife and sister of soldiers at the front.”

“At her riposte, the troops who faced her lowered their guns.”

She was elected to two Soviets in St Petersburg and organised the Red Guards who defended the revolution. She was also in charge of raids into the wealthier districts to seize weapons.

Leadership matters in revolutions—the leadership by parties and the leadership by individuals. The Bolsheviks had leadership at every level.

This is part of a series of weekly articles on the Russian Revolution tinyurl.com/sw1917



Kruglova would pack Bolshevik leaflets into boxes of grenades

Protest as Labour Party expels anti-Zionist

by NICK CLARK

THE LABOUR Party expelled a prominent Israeli anti-Zionist academic and campaigner last week, citing antisemitism.

Respected socialist and philosopher Dr Moshe Machover—a well-known critic of Israel—was expelled after one of his articles was distributed at Labour’s conference.

Machover’s article criticised Israel and its founding ideology Zionism. But it was not antisemitic.

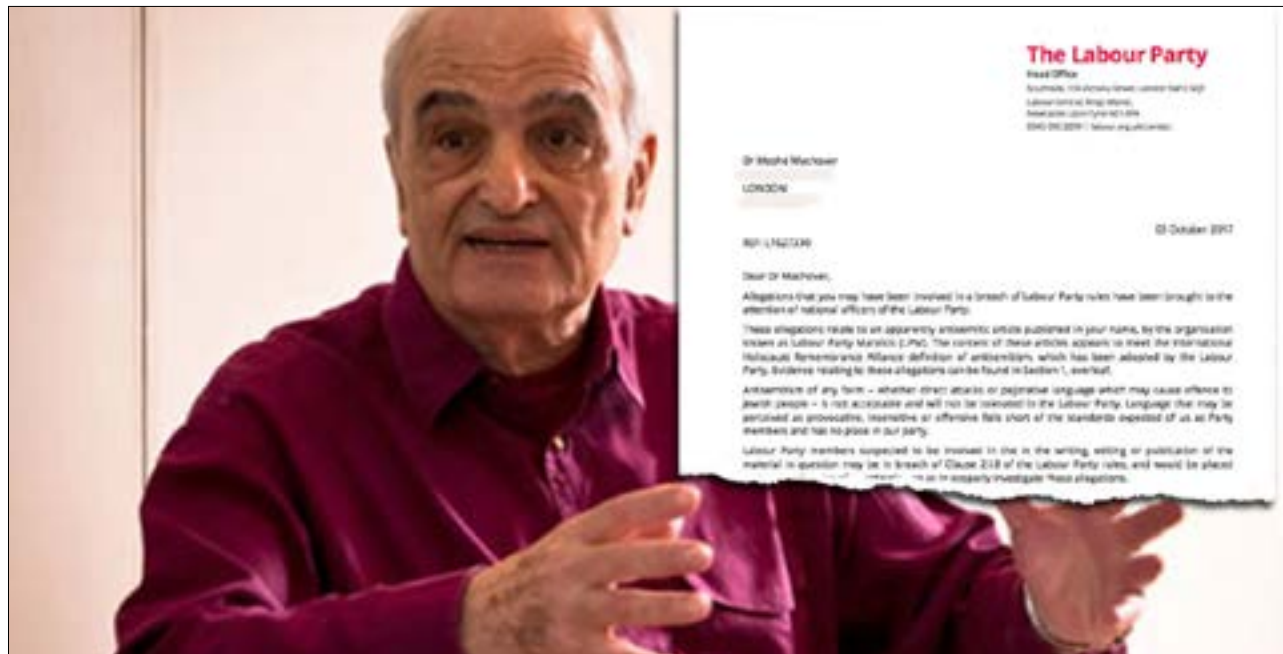
A letter from Labour headquarters told Machover he had been expelled because of his links with the left wing group that distributed the article.

Principles

The letter said the group’s “expressed aims and principles are incompatible with those of the Labour Party”.

If writing for a paper which is outside Labour leads to expulsion, the party will have to remove Jeremy Corbyn who for years wrote regularly for the Morning Star.

The expulsion letter also says that Machover’s article “appears to meet the



MOSHE MACHOVER speaking—and the letter expelling him from the Labour Party

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of antisemitism”.

The definition used by Labour is often interpreted in a way that prohibits legitimate criticism of Zionism.

Zionism is the belief that Israel has a right to exist in

Palestine as an exclusively Jewish state.

It excludes Palestinians from any form of independent political control, and racism towards Palestinians is at its very core.

Opposition to Zionism is not antisemitic. The Jewish

Voice for Labour group issued a statement supporting Machover.

The statement said, “Moshe Machover is a highly respected Jewish historian and a life-long socialist, and was founder of the socialist party Matzpen in Israel.”

It added that Machover’s article, “Contains no attack on Jews. It is, rather, a scholarly analysis of Zionism, one that is well worth reading and debating.”

“Zionism is an ideology (one also espoused by non-Jews) and as such must be

open for study and debate.”

Machover’s expulsion comes amid fears by pro-Israel activists inside Labour that they are losing the argument about Palestinian rights.

There have also been deliberate attempts by right wing members and groups around the Labour Party to smear the left as antisemitic.

Conflate

They conflate criticism of Israel and Zionism with antisemitism and imply that the left’s support for Palestinians encourages antisemites.

A similar, Islamophobic argument suggests that antisemitism is specifically a problem among Muslims.

Such smears give the right opportunities to attack Labour. Tory prime minister Theresa May last week said Labour is “riven with the stain of antisemitism”.

And the smears undermine the basis for anti-racist campaigns that unite Jews and Muslims.

Machover should be defended and Labour’s leaders and left-led national executive should ensure he is immediately reinstated.

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Cutting conditions—the real cost of privatising the post

As 110,000 postal workers prepare for a national strike for 48 hours from 19 October, Nick Clark rifles through the bosses' mail to expose the excuses for worsening conditions

THE COMING strikes in Royal Mail are make or break for postal workers. Their outcome will shape the future of what it's like to work for Royal Mail—and the whole structure of the workforce.

Underlying the dispute is a battle between two different visions of how public services—and society as a whole—should be run.

On one side is the ruthless vision of Royal Mail's shareholders and directors. They think the post should be stripped down and run for profit.

The alternative is a service not oriented on the market's needs—where workers are paid properly and treated fairly.

Privatisation drives all the attacks on postal workers' terms and conditions. Royal Mail has faced competition since 2002, when the Labour government opened the industry up to the market after an order from the European Union.

Full privatisation in 2014 finished the job. Royal Mail now competes with other private companies, particularly over parcels.

Those companies pick and choose the most profitable areas to deliver in and employ their workers on horrific terms and conditions (see right).

Service

Meanwhile Royal Mail as “universal service provider” has to give the same service and prices to every area of the country six days a week.

Bosses' answer is cuts and attacks on wages and conditions, spurred on by government regulator Ofcom which demands “efficiency”.

For years Royal Mail bosses have piled the pressure onto postal workers, extending deliveries with no extra time to do them in. Now they want



GATE MEETINGS laid the basis for the massive yes vote

to bring workers' conditions much closer in line with worse ones at rival delivery companies (see below).

Bosses want to push back Royal Mail's delivery times until later in the afternoon. They say this is to accept and process parcels later in the evening in time for the next day's delivery.

But that also means they'll be able to slash Royal Mail's overnight distribution network that gets letters to delivery offices by morning.

And they'll phase in a new workforce on much worse terms and conditions based around the new delivery

times. The postal workers' CWU union has a different plan.

Instead of slashing Royal Mail, it wants deliveries from morning until evening. It also calls for a shorter working week to protect full time jobs in the face of automation.

The union says this means Royal Mail could compete for letters and parcels without destroying workers' jobs and conditions. That sounds a better plan. But the logic of privatisation drives bosses the other way.

Bosses pretend the attacks are the only possible response to changes in

the industry. But they're driven by the idea that competition and the market provide the best public services.

In fact privatisation means the postal industry is being run down—and users and workers of all delivery companies are paying for it.

It's perfectly possible to have a postal service that meets everyone's needs without having to attack the workers' terms and conditions.

But fighting for that needs a bigger political struggle to break from the system where crucial services are run for profit.

Race to the bottom of mailbag

TWELVE other companies carry out country-wide deliveries—and many of them employ their workers on horrific terms and conditions.

Those companies can offer some very fast delivery times relatively cheaply in some areas, especially towns and cities. But they can also charge extra for deliveries in more remote areas such as the Scottish highlands, and deliver less frequently.

Two of the biggest, Hermes and Amazon,



Working conditions threatened

classify their workers as self-employed. That means they're paid per delivery or a fixed amount per route—and are under pressure to make as many deliveries as possible.

Being self-employed also means those workers aren't entitled to sick pay or paid holidays—and bosses can punish them by giving their delivery routes to someone else.

Workers have to provide their own vehicles or rent them from the company, and pay their own expenses.

That means workers' real-terms salaries can fall below the minimum wage.

Royal Mail bosses plans point in this direction.

Bosses want to pit delivery workers in a race to the bottom.

Unions have to fight to raise working conditions for everyone.

Fewer letters don't spell end of postal workers' power

THERE are big changes happening in the postal industry. This means Royal Mail may have to reorganise its network.

The biggest change is in the volume and type of mail it has to collect and deliver. The number of letters that Royal Mail handles is falling yet the number of parcels is going up.

That's down to the internet—emails are replacing letters while online shopping is fuelling the growth in parcels.

Royal Mail bosses use this change to justify their

attacks on workers. And one of the biggest threats they've used to stop workers striking is that big businesses will take their post to private companies.

Bosses want workers to give in to worse terms and conditions because of competition over parcels.

Dominates

Yet Royal Mail workers aren't as powerless as their bosses like to make out.

For a start Royal Mail still dominates parcels. Royal Mail's own most recent figures showed it handled 53 percent of all

parcels in 2015. And it's not as easy for companies to switch delivery companies as bosses like to make out.

But workers' real power still lies where bosses say they're weakest—letters.

It's true that that the number of



letters sent in Britain is falling—dropping from some 14 billion a year in 2011-12 to 12 billion in 2015-16.

But that decline has slowed down since 2012. And the bulk of Royal Mail's letters comes from “downstream access”.

These are letters that are collected in bulk by private companies but passed on to Royal Mail for delivery.

Private companies rely on Royal Mail because its network is the

only one that can handle such vast amounts of post. That's the same network Royal Mail bosses are so keen on running down.

Most of those letters come from big businesses such as energy firms that send out bills. They account for more than 7 billion letters a year—and that's stayed fairly constant.

That means Royal Mail workers are still very powerful. Their action can have a knock-on effect on big businesses—and the private delivery firms—that all rely on Royal Mail.

IN BRIEF

Unite union joins Sellafield pay fight

WORKERS IN the Unite union have entered the battle over pay at Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant with a 90 percent vote for strikes.

Unite, which has 1,100 members in Sellafield, said it will call industrial action “in the near future”.

The GMB union, with 3,000 members employed by Sellafield Limited, already struck last month.

Workers in both unions rejected the 1.5 percent pay offer imposed by bosses.

In a separate dispute over pay grading, more than 60 Sellafield firefighters also in GMB are set for 12 hour strikes on Tuesday and Thursday of next week.

Say no to Durham council's TA deal

DURHAM teaching assistants (TAs) began voting this week on the latest pay deal offered to them by the Labour-run council.

The TAs have been fighting for over two years, with many saying the new deal is the same as the one they strongly rejected in July.

The new deal means almost 500 TAs will still lose pay. They have been offered a “progression board”—but TAs are unclear what that means.

The Unison union, which represents most TAs, is wrongly urging acceptance. It has not called meetings to discuss the offer.

Fresh ballot for Fujitsu workers

WORKERS at IT services giant Fujitsu are set to begin voting in a ballot for fresh strikes, five months after their action was suspended.

The Unite union members have rejected the offer made by bosses in May.

In addition to their original grievances over job security, pay, pensions and union rights they are now fighting new attacks on the union.

Workers says reps have been targeted for redundancy as part of Fujitsu's cuts programme, and its proposals would make it harder for reps to communicate with members. This follows the axing of consultation forum Fujitsu Voice.

Roasting bosses at Middlesex hospital

WORKERS at North Middlesex Hospital were to protest this week over job cuts and pay. The workers, in the GMB union, are employed by contractor Medirest.

The company cut porter numbers from 71 to 61 and some wages by £20 a week.

The protest includes a barbecue with free burgers for those who attend.

●Protest Thurs 12 Oct, 12 noon, North Middlesex Hospital, Sterling Way, London, N18 1QX.

TRANSPORT



SOUTHERN RAIL pickets at London Victoria station last week

PICTURE: IVOR RIDDELL

Two more networks join the rail safety fight

by SARAH BATES

TRAIN GUARDS at four networks struck over safety on Tuesday and Thursday of last week.

The RMT union members mounted picket lines at stations across the Merseyrail, Southern, Arriva Rail North and Greater Anglia networks.

It was their latest walkout in a long-running dispute over the implementation of driver only operation (DOO).

DOO would remove the safety critical role of the guard from the train, making train travel unsafe and inaccessible.

The dispute is escalating as more train networks have voted for action over the implementation of DOO.

Southern rail workers have been in dispute for 18 months, but this was Greater Anglia workers' first strike.

One RMT member on the



On the picket line in Leeds

PICTURE: CHRISTIAN HOGBERG

Northern Rail network told Socialist Worker, “There are going to be more strikes.

“The company say it's not going to settle, but what it's proposing is not safe so we have to keep going.”

Workers at South Western trains were the latest to join the fight. They voted overwhelmingly for strikes in a ballot that closed last week.

Train bosses went to dangerous lengths to try to

undermine the strike. Greater Anglia ran trains with strike-breaking management acting as a Person Utilised as a Guard (Pug).

This saw managers try and run the service, but with only a fraction of the training the guards have.

A Pug tried to direct a train through a red signal on Tuesday of last week.

In another incident, a Pug didn't know where the door switches were—and the driver refused to run the service.

In both cases the actions of the driver prevented an accident. Greater Anglia admitted that Pugs only receive “basic training”.

This dispute is politically motivated. The Tories are determined to help train bosses drive through the highly-profitable DOO and weaken the rail unions.

More coordinated strikes can beat the bosses' attacks.

BUS WORKERS

Hundreds of bus workers plan pay walkout in Devon

OVER 800 bus workers at Stagecoach South West in Devon were set to walk out over pay this Friday.

The RMT union members in Exeter, Torquay and Barnstaple are striking for a pay rise in line with the RPI rate of inflation—3.9 percent.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said, “Bus workers in the South West deserve a fair deal on pay.

“At the moment they are being offered a package that stacks up to a de facto pay cut. This is entirely unacceptable.”

The drivers, cleaners and

engineers plan further strikes on Tuesday of next week and Monday 30 October.

■THE UNITE union suspended a strike over pay at the First Manchester bus company following “constructive talks” with management.

The workers were set to walk out on Monday at First's depots in Bolton and Rusholme.

They had already held a successful 24 hour walkout, affecting 43 routes.

Unite has agreed an offer with bosses and will ballot its members this week.

LONDON UNDERGROUND

Delays on strike line

THE ASLEF train drivers' union called off a strike by its members on London Underground last week after last minute talks at conciliation service Acas.

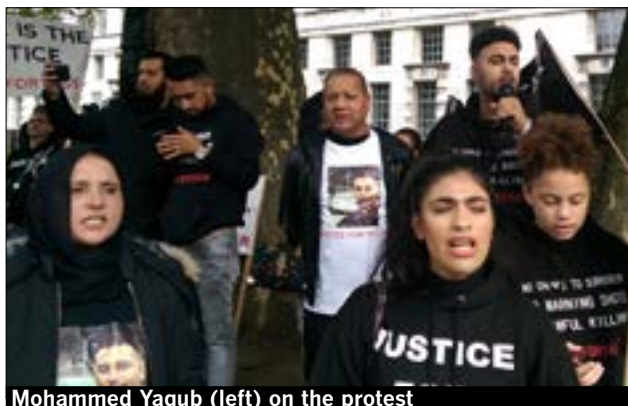
The walkout was set to coincide with the second day of train strikes (see above).

The Aslef members are in dispute over longer working hours from the 2015 Night Tube contract.

Aslef organiser Finn Brennan said “sufficient progress” had been made.

But he added, “We will not hesitate to call action in the future if needed to ensure all the commitments made are fully delivered.”

YASSAR YAQUB



Mohammed Yaqub (left) on the protest

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

Family demands answers over Yassar Yaqub's death

A COACHLOAD of protesters rallied at Downing Street last Saturday demanding justice for Yassar Yaqub, who was killed by police in West Yorkshire on 2 January.

Yassar's father Mohammed Yaqub told Socialist Worker, “Yassar was coming home when police cars pulled alongside him.

“There was no warning—they shot him through the window.”

Protesters, many of them Yassar's friends and relatives, chanted “We want answers”.

They spelled out their grievances with how police operated that night—“No warning shots, no chance to

surrender, no sirens, no body cameras.

“No justice, no peace, no humanity.”

Mohammed said, “My wife and I had to wait for seven hours in the cold before they'd talk to us, it was always ‘just five more minutes’.

“The Independent Police Complaints Commission has been involved, but we've had no answers.

“I've just handed in a letter to Theresa May asking the government to get involved.

“We are going to keep protesting until we get to the bottom of it.”

KINGSLEY BURRELL

Officers cleared of perjury in death in custody case

THREE COPS accused of lying in evidence that they gave concerning the death of Kingsley Burrell were cleared last Wednesday.

Paul Adey, Mark Fannon and Paul Greenfield were cleared of perjury and perverting the course of justice by jurors at Birmingham Crown Court.

The three cops were alleged to have lied during an initial inquiry into the

death and at the subsequent coroner's hearing.

Kingsley was killed after police were called to the mental health unit he was being held at.

In 2015 an inquest jury ruled that restraint had been a factor in Kingsley's death. So had failure to provide basic medical attention.

Kingsley's family have called for an inquiry into his death.

RASHAN CHARLES

Uncle of Rashan Charles slams cops for ‘negligence’

THE FUNERAL of Rashan Charles took place in London last Friday.

Rashan died after being tackled to the ground by a police officer in a shop in Hackney in east London in July.

The Metropolitan Police has refused to suspend the officer, against the advice of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

The IPCC is investigating the officer for gross misconduct.

Rod Charles is a former Metropolitan Police sergeant and Rashan's great-uncle.

He said that the force used against Rashan was “unreasonable, disproportionate, unnecessary and excessive”.

He said, “Over two months has elapsed and the Charles family have received no information on the purposes or objectives for detaining Rashan.

“We believe there is gross negligence and this is an avoidable death.”

PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS

Unions launch ballots to fight the Tories' pay cap

UP TO 2,000 people marched against the public sector pay cap in Edinburgh last Saturday.

Unison union general secretary Dave Prentis spoke at the rally, which was organised by Unison Scotland.

Other unions are launching ballots to strike.

Civil service workers in the PCS union began voting in a consultative ballot on Monday of this week.

The ballot, set to end on Monday 6 November, will ask PCS members if they would be prepared to strike to beat the 1 percent public sector pay cap.

The ballot should be a stepping stone towards national strikes across the civil service to beat the pay cap.

Opportunity

PCS activists should organise the campaign as if it were a real strike vote—and take the opportunity to build the mood for a fightback.

But the NUT section of the National Education Union (NEU) narrowly voted against fighting over pay last week. A motion on pay was defeated by 19 votes to 17 at the NUT's national executive committee.

The motion resolved to "approach other teacher unions to discuss the



"PAY UP now," say marchers in Edinburgh last Saturday

PICTURE: UNISON SCOTLAND

possibility of submitting a joint pay claim".

Joint general secretary of the NEU Kevin Courtney argued against the motion.

Its defeat means that teachers will not be part of any joint union fight over public sector pay.

Meanwhile the UCU union

is set to ballot workers in some colleges. Bosses had offered a below-inflation 1 percent rise.

The Further Education Committee (FEC) of the UCU met on Friday of last week and voted overwhelmingly to ballot for strikes over pay.

It follows a 75 percent vote

for action in a consultative ballot.

The union's national executive committee had previously decided that consultative ballots must achieve a 50 percent turnout in order to lead to a strike ballot.

The FEC will ballot all branches with a turnout of

30 percent or higher in the consultative ballot.

UCU activists should campaign for a big yes vote—and the union should swiftly call action.

But much more needs to be done to turn union leaders' fighting talk over pay into a reality.

EDUCATION

Strikes to save jobs at universities of Leeds and Manchester

UCU UNION members at two universities are preparing for strikes against job cuts.

Lecturers at the University of Leeds were set to strike for three days from Wednesday over attacks on conditions.

It follows a 24-hour strike in June.

Bosses there want to bring in a new clause that would make "some other substantial reason" a ground for dismissal.

The UCU has called this a "sackers' charter".

Lesley McGorrigan is campaigns secretary of Leeds university UCU. She told Socialist Worker, "Preparing for the strike is going really well. Lectures are being cancelled on the strike days and we're quite buoyant."

"It will be the first time that we have held a three-day strike at the university—and we're doing it because we want to win."

UCU members backed strikes by 67 percent in a ballot.

UCU members at the University of Manchester are set to strike on 23 and 24 October. Bosses there want to impose 140 job cuts.

Bosses claim they need to create "financial headroom". Yet it recorded a £36 million surplus in 2015/16. Its financial statement for the same year showed it has £1.5 billion in reserves.

Sadie Robinson

● Send messages of support to ucu@leeds.ac.uk

CINEMA WORKERS

Picturehouse pickets go to film festival

by ALISTAIR FARROW

STRIKING WORKERS at five sites of the Picturehouse cinema chain protested outside the opening of the London Film Festival on Wednesday of last week.

The workers were due to strike again this week.

Workers at all London Picturehouse sites were set to strike from 3.30pm on Sunday. Two-hour strikes were also set to take place at the Hackney and central London sites from 5pm each day from Wednesday to Saturday.

The workers are in the Bectu section of the Prospect union. They struck despite bosses' threats to sack them if they took part. A letter from the bosses'

lawyers to Bectu said, "Our client is minded to dismiss any employee who takes part in the strikes by reason of having taken part in unofficial industrial action."

Bosses claim that a recent pay rise, negotiated through the company's fake union The Forum, makes current strikes illegal.

Workers' demands include the London Living Wage of £9.75 in London and £8.45 outside London. Other demands include maternity pay, paternity pay, decent sick pay and recognition for Bectu at all sites.

Pay has risen to £9.30 an hour. But Picturehouse claims that this is "equivalent to £9.92 an hour as we're one of the few cinema companies who pay for breaks".

Striker Andrea Cencioni told Socialist Worker, "Even if they gave us the Living Wage we'd still be on strike. We have a lot more demands that they're not acknowledging."

Picturehouse sacked four workers for trade union activities earlier in the year.

Agata, a rep from the Ritzy cinema in south London, told Socialist Worker, "Picturehouse's latest offer is a step forward, but it's not enough."

Workers are holding two-hour strikes over nine days. But the strikes need to be much more hard-hitting to have an impact.

"We're building membership at other sites," said Agata. "It's not the easiest thing, but we're getting stronger and better."

CIVIL SERVICE WORKERS

Threshold-busting action vote drives battle forward

PCS UNION members at the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) have won their ballot for strikes and action short of strikes.

The ballot delivered an 84 percent vote to strike on a 70 percent turnout.

This is far above the minimum turnout thresholds in the Tories' Trade Union Act.

The dispute involves workers including driving examiners, traffic examiners and vehicle testing staff.

DVLA bosses plan to introduce a "flexible working" regime. Staff would be expected to travel to different workplaces in their own time, on top of their working day.

This means workers could be required to work the equivalent of an extra day per week for free.

The DVSA also intends to

rip up an interim agreement covering terms and conditions.

The ballot result comes at a time when PCS is launching a national consultative ballot over pay (see above). The DVSA dispute cannot be seen in isolation to the pay campaign. It shows how we can beat the thresholds.

Strikes relating to terms and conditions can be linked to the pay campaign. The slogan of "working longer, harder and for less" has proved successful in linking the issues up.

Reps were set to meet this week to plan strikes, discuss fundraising for members involved, and to put in place a political campaign that seeks to link up with other transport unions as well.

Paul Williams, PCS DFT group president (pc)

REFUSE WORKERS

Birmingham solidarity launched

UP TO 60 people—including ten bin workers—attended a meeting in support of the Birmingham bin workers on Tuesday of last week.

The speakers included bin workers' Unite union convenor Richard Beddows, Unite regional officer Lynn Shakespeare and Unison union branch secretary Caroline Johnson.

The meeting agreed on practical steps that everyone could take to make sure that the bin workers win. A committee has been formed to make sure all the actions agreed happen.

The strike was paused last month pending the outcome of a High Court case. **Mike Johnson**



THE POSTAL workers' CWU union organised hundreds of workplace meeting to build the strike vote. They also ran a highly effective social media campaign

POST BOSSES ARE RUNNING SCARED

by NICK CLARK

ROYAL MAIL bosses ran to the courts this week in a desperate bid to stop workers from striking.

Postal workers were set to strike on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of next week in a watershed battle over pensions, pay and conditions.

But Royal Mail applied to the high court for an injunction on Monday of this week in an effort to stop the action from going ahead.

The CWU union believes the hearing is set to take place at the high court in central London on Thursday of this week.

CWU members were preparing to protest outside.

Agreement

Bosses claimed the CWU had not followed an agreement signed in 2013.

In the meantime there was no guarantee that Royal Mail's attempt to stall the strikes would be successful.

Next week's official strikes were set to go ahead as Socialist Worker went to press.

Workers are determined to show that, whatever the outcome, Royal Mail won't stop them from fighting.

Mark Dolan, a CWU area rep in north London told Socialist Worker, "If Royal Mail were to win the court injunction there would be a lot of very angry postal workers."

"The members will be angry off the back of a huge vote for strikes that their right to take industrial action has been taken away from them."

The legal action comes after postal workers delivered a thumping vote for strikes last Tuesday—by 89 percent on a 73 percent turnout.

Bosses want to force through an attack on pensions that will see some workers lose thousands of pounds in their retirement.

And planned changes to Royal Mail's delivery model are aimed at transforming the workforce into one that's based on part-time casual workers.

The strike vote, which followed hundreds of mass meetings and a steady stream of unofficial walkouts across the country, shows they'll



North London union rep Mark Dolan

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Members won't be happy with Royal Mail trying to run the clock down

face strong resistance.

The result smashed through the 50 percent turnout threshold that the Tories imposed on industrial action ballots in a bid to stop strikes from happening.

But no sooner had the CWU announced the strike dates than Royal Mail bosses threatened legal action if union leaders didn't call the action off.

They pointed out that the Agenda for Growth

SOLIDARITY

Show support at the picket lines next week

● The strike will begin with any workers whose shifts start on or after 11am next Thursday

● This means action on that day will mainly take place at mail centres

● Most delivery workers will join the action on Friday and Saturday

● Strikers will start returning to work for any shifts scheduled to start on or after 11am on Saturday morning

to back down in the face of these threats.

Mark said, "Members are not going to be happy with Royal Mail trying to run the clock down."

"If talks go through into December then there's every likelihood that there could be some kind of reaction to that from members."

Picket

Paul Garraway, a CWU rep in Oxford, said union members had to make sure picket lines are as big as possible.

They should be joined by other trade unionists—everyone should get behind the post workers.

He said "I would argue for everybody to be on the picket line," he said.

"We have to make sure we've got good turnouts and that it's solid."

"We need to show Royal Mail that we're determined and that will mean a good turnout on the picket line and a solid strike."

On other pages
The real cost of selling off the post >> Page 17